

**M'sia-Indonesia to sign MoU on maids soon**  
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Indonesia's freeze on maids to Malaysia is expected to be lifted once both countries signs a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in a month, said Human Resources Minister Dr S Subramaniam.

NONESubramaniam said the MoU will be signed once the issues of cost structuring and recruitment cost of bringing in Indonesian maids are ironed out.

"We are resolving the issue of Indonesian maids...we hope to finalise it by another month," he told reporters at the Amma Foundation's presentation of scholarships to SPM students today.

Subramaniam said many main issues have already been solved while the issue on cost structuring is still being discussed between officials of both countries.

"Once reaching an agreement on a reasonable cost structure, we will sign the MoU and after that [we will be] able to move (lifting of the ban and bringing in maids)," he said.

Indonesia freezed its supply of maids to Malaysia last June due to abuse and lack of benefits and now requests a minimum monthly salary and at least one day off per week for its maids.

M'sia subjected to limitations

Kuala Lumpur and Jakarta recently signed a Letter of Intent to give a new dimension to the employment of domestic workers in Malaysia and the two countries agreed on revised terms.

Indonesian domestic helpers maidsSubramaniam also spoke on the recently held 99th session of the International Labour Conference organised by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in Geneva, where he held several bilateral meetings with his counterparts from other countries.

The minister said there were countries from Africa and the Middle East that were keen to increase cooperation with Malaysia in areas such as skills upgrading and training.

He said Malaysia had told the conference that on the issue of migrant workers, due to the local situation, Malaysia has certain limitations - certain things it can do and certain things it was not able to fulfill.

"So we have requested that whatever policies the international community dealt with should consider the local laws and regulations and the situation of the various countries. So it will be easier for us to actually comply to whatever standards they are putting up," he said.

Meanwhile, Subramaniam who is also an MIC vice president said 361 Malaysian Indian students were given JPA scholarships for 2010, compared with 354 in 2009.

Out of this, 161 are for foreign universities and 200 for local universities, he said.

- Bernama

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